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## **CITY FILES NUISANCE CHARGES AGAINST DANCE HALL PROMOTERS**

INDIANAPOLIS -- Promoters responsible for last month's deadly shooting at an under-21 dance party at the Indiana State Fairgrounds have been named as defendants in a lawsuit filed today by the City of Indianapolis. The Office of City Prosecutor has identified Vanessa Searcy, Mark Battles, Brian Hill, Derrico Freeling, Cory Parchman and Desean Boykin as Defendants in the lawsuit, citing them as a public nuisance. Additionally, the Defendants did not obtain a dance hall license, one of the 24 required business license types administered by the Department of Code Enforcement (DCE).

The dance, "Ice Cold X-Mas Jam," which took place on December 20, 2010, ended in gunfire that killed one victim and injured another.

Four of the six promoters have hosted numerous dance events illegally in the past. Searcy, Battles, Hill and Boykin previously were permanently enjoined from hosting any dance event without the requisite license from the City and therefore also face contempt charges for disregarding the Court's prior Orders. Freeling hosted a similar dance on December 17, 2010, just three days prior to the night of the fatal shooting. That event also was marred by gunfire resulting in injury.

"Due to their repeated past violations, it is evident that the promoters involved in this event knew the licensing requirements," said Rick Powers, director of the Department of Code Enforcement (DCE). "DCE licenses specific business types in order to protect safety and the quality of life for neighborhoods. The City requires a dance hall license to ensure there is adequate insurance and proper and sufficient security in place, and that anyone involved in planning the event has completed a background check."

The Public Nuisance count is being filed as a response to Defendants repeatedly breaking the law that requires them to obtain a dance hall license. "Violence at these under-21 events occurs all too often in Indianapolis," said City Prosecutor Helen Marchal. "A life was lost at this tragic event at the State Fairgrounds. We are requesting compensatory damages to cover the cost of law enforcement's investigation, as well as punitive damages."

The six defendants are scheduled to appear in Court on February 16, 2011.

*The mission of the Department of Code Enforcement (DCE) is to improve the quality of life in the City of Indianapolis through strategic application of civil code regulation; effective licensing, permitting, inspection, enforcement, and abatement practices; and local government oversight of property safety and maintenance, business, event, professional, and construction industries.*

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